

Multiculturalism on Screen – subtitling and the translation of cultural differences

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Introduction

One of the most significant legacies of successive migration policies in Australia has been the transformation of Australia's linguistic landscape. Australia is a country where many different languages are spoken from Aboriginal languages still practiced in remote regional communities, to the use of homeland or first languages in many households. Today the most commonly spoken languages in Australia are English, Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Mandarin and Vietnamese. This linguistic diversity is at the heart of Australian multiculturalism. It is a powerful indicator of the complexities of cross-cultural interaction in hyper-diverse societies. Languages carry with them worldviews and values they are one of the most intimate markers of identity. While English may be the dominant or national language for many Australians it is often *not* the language of everyday life. Australia is multilingual and this reality presents a range of challenges to social communication.

In this paper I want to explore how Australia's multicultural broadcaster, SBS, functions as a platform for intercultural exchange: how it translates cultural differences or transfers linguistic and cultural elements across boundaries. *The politics of translation* is my central concern and I approach this term as both a literal or technical process and a metaphorical one: as a process of communication across difference that is inevitably caught up in certain degrees of incomprehension, confusion and incommensurability. In other words, I do not see translation as a transparent system of communication and reciprocity, as a mirror. Attempts to transfer linguistic and cultural meanings are always accompanied by difficulties because communication is social, it is mediated by institutional, political, aesthetic and other dynamics that are difficult to contain.

Analysis of the politics and practices of translation does not feature much in debates about multiculturalism in Australia. The history of multicultural policy has focused more on addressing the specific needs of migrant groups or on nurturing tolerance and openness to diversity amongst all

Australians. Yet, in both these policy orientations translation is fundamental. It has been impossible to address and assist new arrivals without using their languages. It has also been impossible to help all Australians have a more expansive or tolerant outlook without making foreign languages and immigrant cultures less strange, and therefore more accessible, through the use of anything from subtitles, to ‘multicultural food days’ in schools, to harmony awards. For cultures to communicate across their differences a whole range of translation practices are required and in this process different identities are not so much exchanged as actively produced. As Meaghan Morris says in her essay on Naoki Sakai’s book *Translation and Subjectivity* ‘Sakai clearly shares with other theorists a conception of translation as a practice producing difference out of incommensurability (rather than equivalence out of difference) and of the “matter” of translation as heterogeneous all the way down’ (Morris, 2006, 177).

Sakai’s theorization of the politico-ethical significance of translation is very valuable. It represents one of the most sophisticated approaches to translation within contemporary cultural theory and it shapes my analysis of SBS. In the rest of this paper I want to investigate various translation practices at work in this multicultural media institution with a focus on how particular techniques for enabling cross-cultural communication *produce difference*. The main translation practice I am going to focus on is subtitling which has been central to the development of SBS. However, subtitling is not a simple or straightforward technical process. It is thoroughly caught up in the wider institutional cultures of SBS, transnational flows of media content and the ways in which this media organisation has approached or invented multiculturalism. Through the example of subtitling it is possible to learn a lot about the politics of translation within multicultural societies and the ways in which cultures attempt to understand each other.

The first thing I will do is briefly set out the history of SBS for those of you who may be unfamiliar with it. Then I want to examine three case studies where subtitles both produce and translate difference in distinct ways. The first example will be the case of the Japanese TV series the *Iron Chef* that has screened on SBS for over 10 years. When it was first screened it used English subtitles, more recently SBS has been using the American dubbed version. How do these two approaches to translation (dubbing and subtitles) produce ‘Japaneseness’ or a set of meaning for Japanese culture and identity? And what is the difference between hearing the Japanese language whilst reading English translation, or hearing American voiceovers that completely obliterate the sound of Japanese language? The second example will be an examination of *World Watch* an SBS program that screens unsubtitled domestic news bulletins from around the world. What are the effects of an absence of translation on making sense of foreign cultures? How does unsubtitled content that most Australians cannot understand sit within the wider politics and objectives of cross cultural aware-

ness? Finally, I want to look briefly at the meanings of subtitling local content. How does the use of subtitles on Australian made programming unsettle comfortable notions of a 'national language' and linguistic homogeneity? Here the example will be *Ten Canoes* an award winning film supported by SBS Independent, SBS's commissioning arm. This film was shot entirely in indigenous language with English subtitles and voiceover, it explicitly addresses English speakers as foreigners.

Background to SBS

Australia's Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is the only multicultural public service broadcaster in the world. Set up by the Whitlam Labor government in 1975, SBS's social remit was, and still is, to cater to the special communication needs of ethnic and Aboriginal minorities and to promote awareness and understanding of cultural diversity amongst all Australians.

The creation of SBS was a response to the massive waves of migration Australia experienced after WW II. Between 1945 and 1956 nearly 1 million new settlers arrived, over 50% of them of non-British descent. These new arrivals presented a range of challenges for government. For a long time policies of assimilation prevailed with the emphasis on integrating migrants from non-English language backgrounds into Australian society as fast as possible. There was, however, very little actual government support for this process beyond meeting the immediate needs of settlement. In terms of media practice there was little acknowledgement of these new populations as potential audiences or citizens. Mainstream media, particularly the ABC and commercial TV broadcasters, remained resolutely 'white' or Anglo in their orientation. There were a small cluster of shows on commercial radio in languages other than English targeting new arrivals and offering community information, homeland music and news etc. But this development of pockets of multilingual content on air was the exception not the norm. These radio shows also attracted some local criticism. Radio in different languages triggered complaints to the radio regulator from listeners who were disturbed to hear content they couldn't understand. These listeners saw untranslated content as potentially subversive and against the policy of assimilation. Here we see a powerful example of how assimilation produces a *one way politics of translation*. In refusing to hear difference or expressing concern about the incomprehension of other cultures, assimilation denies diversity. Assimilation is not based on intercultural exchange or pluralisation but on the incorporation of difference.

In the 1970s, with the election of the new progressive Labor government, debate about multiculturalism began. This debate shifted the emphasis away from policies of assimilation to policies focusing on cross cultural relations, and the ways in which community relations in diverse societies

can be managed. The shift from assimilation to multiculturalism involved the creation of a whole array of new policy initiatives. These included, for example, the expansion of English language classes for migrants, the creation of multilingual government information and other programs that focused on addressing migrant social exclusion and disadvantage, and on making Anglo Australians more open to or tolerant of different cultures and identities. SBS emerges in this context.

The immediate impetus for the creation of SBS was the introduction of a new national medical insurance scheme, Medicare, which the government was very concerned migrants would not register for and access. So two radio stations – Radio Ethnic Australia – were set up in Sydney and Melbourne to provide key information on this new health policy to migrants *in their own languages*. The success of the radio stations was evident in the overwhelming audience response. After three months they had a listening audience of over 1.1 million. This instant popularity led the government to making the service permanent. In 1980 the radio service was expanded to television under the auspices of the conservative Fraser government. This bipartisan support for SBS shows how rapidly multiculturalism had become ‘settled policy’, that is, seen as an accepted part of federal government responsibilities.

Today SBS runs two TV (analogue and digital) channels that reach more than 95 per cent of the Australian population. In the main capital cities these channels get an average weekly audience of around five million people. SBS Radio broadcasts in 68 languages to all capital cities and some regional centres. No other radio station in the world broadcasts in so many languages. It attracts around 800,000 listeners per week. SBS Online averages around 469,000 unique users per month.

This distinctive media organisation remains one of the most significant achievements of successive Australian government’s multicultural policies. SBS has not simply responded to social change; it has also *generated* it by showing the key role that media can play in nurturing citizen engagement with the age of diversity. The point is that SBS has not simply reflected official multicultural policy, or translated it into media practices, it has also been a leading innovator in multicultural policy showing how media can be key institutions for governing cultural diversity in progressive ways.

One of SBS TV’s most significant early and ongoing achievements was to offer audiences a vision of multicultural Australia, to reflect the impact of massive postwar and more recent immigration on everyday life. From its inception SBS realized that its key role was to broadcast cultural diversity to the benefit of the nation as a whole, that it was not just an ethnic broadcaster or a narrowcaster serving only migrant audiences. As Nigel Milan, a former managing director of SBS declared ‘*SBS’s ultimate responsibility is to nation building, to showing multicultural Australia to itself; to*

tell the stories of Australia in the languages of Australia and to unite the nation through understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity' (Ang, Hawkins and Dabboussy, 2008, p. 2).

You can see how the commitment to social inclusion and dialogue is enshrined in SBS's Charter which is set out below. And how a commitment to multilingualism is absolutely fundamental to this. Unlike all other media services in Australia, apart from niche narrowcasters in migrant languages, SBS understands its audience as heterolingual and this understanding demands very different approaches to media programming. SBS has risen to the challenge of developing a media service that addresses a linguistically mixed audience.

The SBS Charter, provided in the SBS Act, sets out the principal functions of SBS and a number of duties it has to fulfil. The Charter, contained in Section 6 of the Special Broadcasting Services Act 1991, states:

- (1) The principal function of SBS is to provide multilingual and multicultural radio and television services that inform, educate and entertain all Australians and, in doing so, reflect Australia's multicultural society.*
- (2) SBS, in performing its principal function, must:*
- (a) contribute to meeting the communications needs of Australia's multicultural society, including ethnic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and*
 - (b) increase awareness of the contribution of a diversity of cultures to the continuing development of Australian society; and*
 - (c) promote understanding and acceptance of the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of the Australian people; and*
 - (d) contribute to the retention and continuing development of language and other cultural skills; and*
 - (e) as far as practicable, inform, educate and entertain Australians in their preferred languages; and*
 - (f) make use of Australia's diverse creative resources; and*
 - (g) contribute to the overall diversity of Australian television and radio services, particularly taking into account the contribution of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the community broadcasting sector; and*
 - (h) contribute to extending the range of Australian television and radio services, and reflect the changing nature of Australian society, by presenting many points of view and using innovative forms of expression.*

Hearing Difference – The Iron Chef

I now want to explore three examples of the politics of translation in SBS. These examples all focus on television, radio is a very different story. As I have argued practices of cultural and linguistic translation do not so much produce equivalence they produce difference, or a field where incomprehensibility becomes converted into ‘identity’. This field of translation is a space where cultures become connected, where they apprehend the familiar and the unfamiliar.

Initially, SBS built its television service using imported programming from countries where the major migrant communities in Australia had come from. This rise in international television content from the 1980s onwards signaled a major growth in transnational media flows into Australia. SBS spearheaded the diversification of television content on Australian screens and offered an example of a very different way to program TV beyond the parochialism of other media. The challenge was how to make this foreign language programming accessible to diverse Australian audiences.

Although subtitling was a common international practice when SBS TV started it wasn’t common in Australian television. One reason for this was the dominance of English language programs in the international flow of television since the 1960s. Subtitling in European countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden, for example, was generally *from* English into the national language concerned. For SBS television, on the other hand, the task involved the much more unusual one of translating foreign languages programming from Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, Lebanon etc into English.

When SBS was set up the alternative method of dubbing, as used in larger European countries such as Germany and Spain, as opposed to subtitling, was an option. However, dubbing was never a serious consideration, not only because it was much more expensive than subtitling but, more importantly, because subtitling was regarded *as much more reflective of the multicultural brief underpinning SBS*. The choice to opt for subtitling rather than dubbing was a crucial moment where the policy demands for a service that provided both multilingual programs for ethnic communities and programs that would ‘foster the appreciation and development of the cultural diversity of Australian society’ were translated into a set of practical choices about how to deal with foreign content. As the Subtitling Department put it in its 1985 submission to the Committee of Review of the Special Broadcasting Service: *‘televising programs in their original languages with English subtitles retains the integrity of the original languages and allows for adequate representation of Australian languages other than English.’*

So, one of the first units set up in SBS TV was the Subtitling Unit. It rapidly became widely recognised as a pioneer in this field and was identified by many as the heart of the organization, a central place where the diverse strands of multicultural Australia met. Subtitlers also came to play a prominent role in the evolution of SBS. SBS subtitles are generally considered of very high quality, both in terms of idiomatic aptness and in terms of readability. One reason for this, interestingly, was not just practical but also philosophical: it had to do with taking seriously the dialogic nature of 'translation'. That is, translation was seen as not just a technical transposition from one linguistic system to another but also as a much more delicate and empathetic engagement with how complex worlds of meaning could be communicated from one linguistic realm to another. In short, the invention of subtitling at SBS was (and still is) a matter not just of linguistic translation but also *cultural translation*, a process of making different worlds of meaning mutually understandable and commensurable.

As a translation practice, subtitling is much more culturally democratic than dubbing or dual sound transmission (which gives audiences the choice of listening to the original language or to the English language dub) because it forces all audiences to hear the original language, and thus familiarises them at the very least with the *sound* of other languages. Indeed, it is fair to say that one of the cultural innovations SBS brought forth, after a period of initial resistance, was a general public acceptance of subtitled films in Australia. According to a study commissioned by SBS in 2001, 64% of Australians indicated that they watch subtitled films, mostly on SBS TV. As such, SBS's role in combating cultural insularity and encouraging a more cosmopolitan habitus based on embracing global linguistic and cultural diversity cannot be underestimated. SBS Television brought into a singular multicultural public sphere a multiplicity of languages that are generally foreign to each other, and made them mutually understandable through their translation into the national *lingua franca*, English.

In the early years of SBS subtitling acquired a real symbolic centrality in the organization. It wasn't just what helped brand SBS as a unique, never seen before, type of television in Australia, it was also a bridge that allowed foreign content to be used in a number of different ways. Subtitling reflected an awareness of the *cultural* (not just practical) importance of translation in nurturing a linguistically diverse national culture.

Having considered the background and centrality of subtitling in the evolution of SBS TV I now want to examine the example of the Japanese cooking show *Iron Chef*. How has it been programmed on SBS and what does this programming strategy say about the politics of translation? The first thing that is striking about *Iron Chef* is that this imported content cannot be described as

servicing the communication needs of a significant immigrant community. Japanese immigration to Australia is miniscule so there is no obvious need to program content in this language, to provide media that allow this ethnic community to maintain their culture.

In its early years SBS TV sought to screen programs in languages proportional to the size of the relevant migrant communities in Australia; hence the focus on programs from Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Turkey etc. However, this proportional programming presented problems. Not only was it hard to find programs of suitable quality and quantity from these countries it was also obvious that, even with English subtitling, these shows were not attracting a broad cross cultural audience. They were often seen as ‘too ethnic’, as not culturally translatable even if they were linguistically translatable. So SBS began to shift away from community specific programming to international content that would have a more cosmopolitan appeal; that would broaden the cultural horizons of all Australians. *Iron Chef* was part of this shift.

Initially, *Iron Chef* was screened in Japanese with English subtitles. Due to the opposition to dubbing it was seen as important to let the Japanese language be heard. It rapidly became a cult hit on SBS TV and was watched by a large, heterolingual and very loyal audience. Rather than being seen as alienating and too ethnically specific, this cooking show was regarded as unusual international entertainment that appealed to a broad range of viewers; especially those viewers who desired television outside of the mainstream. The translation dynamics at play here reflect a cosmopolitan taste culture. Subtitling makes available diverse television content for audiences that want to position themselves as having distinctive rather than mass or popular tastes. Central to this distinctiveness is an openness to difference or an interest in other cultures beyond your own. It is critical to note, however, that these cosmopolitan practices are not the exclusive preserve of a white middle class they also have significant impacts on viewers with diverse ethnic backgrounds. Subtitling *Iron Chef* enabled all sorts of cross-cultural flows and exchanges for SBS audiences. It made many ethnic audiences less inward looking. Here is Gilbert Sant, Manager of SBS Subtitling and Captioning talking about how his mother watched *Iron Chef*:

‘I mean, here was a woman who is Italian. She loves the Japanese program Iron Chef. She’s sitting at home watching the Japanese programme with English subtitles because she is rapt in that programme, so it’s opened up a whole new world to her. She’s seeing a culture that she’s probably never seen in her life, understanding it all through the subtitles, so you bridge the gap, if you like, from one culture to another, through a different language altogether. I mean, English was not her original language either. (Ang, Hawkins, Dabboussy, 2008, 82)

The other important issue is what happens to *Iron Chef* when it moves from Japan to Australia. How does exporting and subtitling it produce a distinctive set of meanings for Japanese identity and culture? *Iron Chef* is popular mass entertainment in Japan, when it enters into transnational cultural flows and becomes subtitled it takes on new values and meanings. In the institutional context of SBS with its multicultural policy framework, subtitling doesn't simply bridge the difference between Japan and Australia it also produces it. Using Sakai's framework translation does not create relations of equivalence or straightforward cross-cultural communication rather it renders Japan as different and ambiguously foreign. This ambiguity is based on the fact that the presence of subtitles signals that the foreign is both incomprehensible and comprehensible, knowable and unknowable (Sakai, 2006, 71). Translation creates a binary out of incommensurability by imagining Japanese identity as foreign and other to Australia. There is no question that in Australia *Iron Chef* is viewed as an example of the weirdness of Japanese popular culture. Reviews of the show often commented on its kookiness, its crazy competitiveness, its outlandish antics. The fact that it was screened on SBS also led to some criticism that the channel was more interested in international cool or exoticism than the needs of migrant audiences.

In 2006 SBS briefly replaced its Japanese version of *Iron Chef* with the American dubbed version. It received so many protests from viewers that it decided to bring the Japanese version back to the screen even though this version is partly dubbed into American English. Here we have an example of audiences demanding subtitling over dubbing perhaps in the interests of maintaining some connection to their imagined ideal of Japanese authenticity? It is hard to know the exact reasons for this protest perhaps another explanation is a cosmopolitan distaste for American culture? For in the case of dubbing there is no question that the voiceover is very dominant and that Japanese language is rendered impossible to hear. Whatever the explanation the story of *Iron Chef* on SBS reveals an interesting politics of translation involving three key issues: firstly the relationship between ethnic identity programming and cosmopolitan programming, secondly the ways in which subtitles work to make Japan ambiguously foreign and finally the ways in which hearing the language – even if you don't understand it adds to certain registers of 'authentic difference'.

Refusing to Translate – World Watch and unsubtitled news

In my next example I want to explore the significance of unsubtitled content, of the refusal to provide translation. How does the presence of untranslated foreign content signal a distinct multicultural politics? SBS currently runs two different news services: *World Watch* – a morning service that rebroadcasts domestic news bulletins from around the world including NHK, CCTV from Beijing, PBS, Deutsche Welle from Berlin, and many other places. And a locally produced one hour

bulletin in English in the evening called *World News* that has a strong international orientation.

World Watch is example of a transnational media service. These bulletins are downloaded overnight from satellite and then shown the morning after their evening screening in the country of origin. They are screened unsubtitled. There is also a digital *World News* channel that is identical to *World Watch*. The significance of *World Watch* is that it is part of the intensification of global news flows that escalated from the mid 1980s on with the expansion of satellite capacity. Satellites allowed domestic media designed for local or national audiences to be transmitted around the world. However, unlike global news services such as CNN or BBC World or Al Jazeera which privilege English, and that offer a supposedly ‘global’ perspective on events, *World Watch* is re-broadcasting domestic bulletins to service distinct language communities in Australia, with the aim of helping them maintain diasporic connections to homelands. *World Watch* is broadcast ‘in language’ and that means that it is not accessible for all those who do not speak Japanese, or Mandarin or Russian etc. This foreign content is not there to facilitate cross-cultural communication but to facilitate cultural maintenance for particular ethnic communities. It is a powerful example of the vast privacy of language and reminds all Australians of the *fact of linguistic diversity within the nation*.

Having a public media service that has a significant section of programming in languages other than English is powerful recognition of the reality of Australia as a multilingual country. However, not everyone agrees with this positive assessment. *World Watch* has generated a range of tensions about cultural difference with some critics claiming that the absence of subtitles prohibits intercultural communication and understanding, and promotes feelings of exclusion in audiences who do not speak the language. Complainants argue that the absence of translation represents everything that is wrong with multiculturalism. Unassimilated difference challenges social cohesion, it encourages separatism and fragmentation and poses possible threats to national stability – who knows what ‘they’ might be saying about us? Others claim that this service is an example of ghetto media, that it encourages ethnic audiences to stay in their language communities and avoid cross cultural interaction and integration in their adopted country.

This critique assumes that integration involves compulsory use of English. Rather, it is critical to see integration as involving complex dual processes of cultural identity maintenance and participation. What *World Watch* offers is the chance for ethnic audiences to see their difference in relation to other differences, to see how their access to homeland media is enabled by a national multicultural public service broadcaster committed to acknowledging many forms of cultural diversity and their place within the nation. *World Watch* provides a powerful example of the importance of

‘comparative particularity’ that is: an expansive recognition of difference as a common experience rather than as a site of closed linguistic and cultural boundaries needing to be defended.

Ten Canoes – Foreignness Within

The previous two examples have focused on imported transnational content on SBS. However, subtitling has also worked to recognize *foreignness within*. Even though it was used primarily on programs bought overseas, it was also used on locally made programs when migrants spoke in homeland languages. Its effects were powerful in terms of a multicultural politics of recognition that involved the inclusion of linguistic pluralism in national public culture. This subtitling practice disturbed comfortable notions of linguistic homogeneity on TV and in the nation. It reminded Australians that English was one of many languages spoken.

However, rather than explore an example of subtitling migrant languages on local content I want to look at the use of subtitles on indigenous content. *Ten Canoes* is a film made by leading Australian director Rolf de Heer in collaboration with the Yolngu people of the Ramingining region of eastern Arnhem Land. It was funded by an assortment of film funding agencies in Australia and SBS Independent and released to critical acclaim in 2006. The film is set in a time before white contact and focuses on the traditional ways of the Ramingining community. But it isn’t simply an ethnographic account of life before contact, the film moves between two temporalities or time frames: a pre-contact ‘present’ shot in black and white and a mythical past shot in colour, in which the origins of the laws that govern community life for the Ramingining are portrayed.

Ten Canoes tells the story of a young man, Dayindi, who has designs on the youngest wife of his older brother. To teach him the proper ways he is told a story from the mythical past about wrong love, kidnapping, sorcery and more that is designed to remind Dayindi about tribal law and its purpose. The explicit purpose of the film was to capture the history of the people of the Ramingining area, to allow the community to understand how its ancestors lived and to show this culture to the rest of the world. The film was a complex cross-cultural collaboration and shows, as Therese Davis says, ‘that while stories have different forms and functions in different societies, one story can be made to serve two different cultural requirements and . . . expand possibilities for cross-cultural recognition’ (Davis, 2007, 5).

There are many remarkable things about this film but the most interesting is the issue of multilingualism and the use of subtitles. The film is made entirely in indigenous languages from the Ramingining region. This is one of the few remaining areas in Australia where many indigenous lan-

languages are still spoken, where different clan groups use their own language, and where these languages are relatively easily understood by other clans. In the film different actors use different clan languages and there is complete ease amongst the characters about interacting with people who speak different languages. English is secondary to the Yolngu people of this region where the 16 clan groups are represented by 8 language groups. For many of the Yolngu residents English is perhaps their fifth or sixth language so they are not necessarily that fluent in it. One of the most important motivations for making the film from the community's perspective was to keep their languages alive and to show this linguistic diversity to the rest of Australia. In telling their story it was imperative that it be told in languages the community could readily access and that those outside this community would have to access it only via English subtitles.

The politics of subtitling here are powerful. *Ten Canoes* shows how storytelling functions as both a mode of preserving a cultural record and recognition of cultural difference. The Yolngu want their story told but they want it told in their terms, in their language. While they are happy to share their story those outside this community have to recognize their exclusion from this culture, this isn't their story. This is both a literal and a metaphorical exclusion. English speakers (or, we can assume, white audiences) are forced to acknowledge that history didn't start with them, that before colonial dispossession and the assertion of English as the language of the white nation, complex multilingual indigenous nations existed in Australia. In *Ten Canoes* English speakers are offered rich insights into the traditional life of an indigenous community not as an ethnographic tour but from an insider's perspective. They are given a privileged vantage point by being taken into the middle of lived experience. Central to this effect of being 'inside culture' is hearing the language. But in having to access this language via subtitles these audiences are also reminded that they are outside of this culture. In being given access to it, in accepting the Yolngu's gesture of sharing it, a sense of intercultural exchange or translation is experienced but it is a translation experience in which indigenous people control the terms of exchange.

Circling around *Ten Canoes* are the wider politics of post-reconciliation Australia and the role of language in this. To accept the reality of indigenous languages as alive and central to the cultural future of indigenous communities is to see that English doesn't stand for everyone and nor does it effectively unify an imagined community called 'Australia'. There is another linguistic landscape that precedes the imposition of English, that persists and that asserts the presence of a different and much longer history.

Conclusion

In the examples explored here it is possible to see how incisive Sakai's theory of translation is. By focusing on the practices and politics of subtitling at work in SBS, it is possible to see how this translation technique both constructs and mediates difference. Subtitling is far from a simple transfer of linguistic meaning, a mirror onto another culture, it is a way of revealing the complexities of multilingualism and the challenges they present for recognition and social inclusion in highly diverse post colonial cultures.

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